



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**PRESS RELEASE**  
***GRAND JURY RETURNS INDICTMENT  
CHARGING THOLEN WITH  
FAILING TO TELL AUTHORITIES ABOUT  
PRODUCTION AND POSSESSION OF RICIN***

SALT LAKE CITY – A federal grand jury returned an indictment Wednesday afternoon charging Thomas Tholen, age 54, of Riverton, Utah, with one count of misprision of felony in connection with the ricin investigation in Utah and Nevada.

The indictment alleges Tholen had knowledge that a federal felony had been committed -- the production and possession of a biological agent (ricin) -- and failed to report the commission of the crime to authorities. The indictment also alleges Tholen concealed the crime by providing an untruthful statement to authorities.

“Today’s indictment is very straightforward,” U.S. Attorney for Utah Brett L. Tolman said. “It alleges Mr. Tholen knew about the ricin, knew it

had been produced in violation of federal law, and did not report it to authorities. Furthermore, when law enforcement authorities found out about the ricin and started an investigation, the indictment alleges he took an affirmative step to conceal the fact that a crime had been committed. The consequences of this action could have been disastrous.”

Today’s indictment is part of an ongoing investigation in Utah and Nevada into the production of the biological agent. Tholen will be issued a summons to appear in federal court in Salt Lake City where he faces up to three years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000 if he is convicted of the charge. Defendants charged in federal indictments are presumed innocent unless or until proven guilty in court.

"This indictment is the culmination of investigative efforts by a number of local, state and federal agencies who brought their expertise to bear in this case ensuring public safety and a thorough and impartial investigation. The FBI would like to thank all of its partners, the public safety and law enforcement communities and for the contribution they made during this investigation," Timothy Fuhrman, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI in Salt Lake City, said.

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